MARVEL® COMICS

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

MARVEL PG 40 481

STRACZYNSKI
ROMITA JR
HANNA

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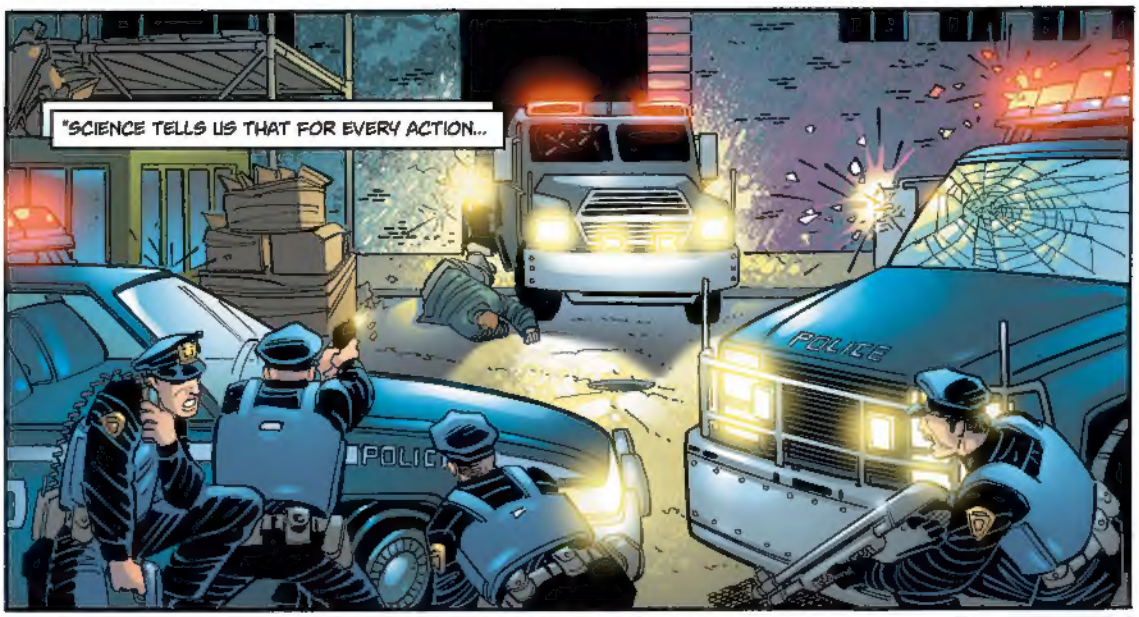

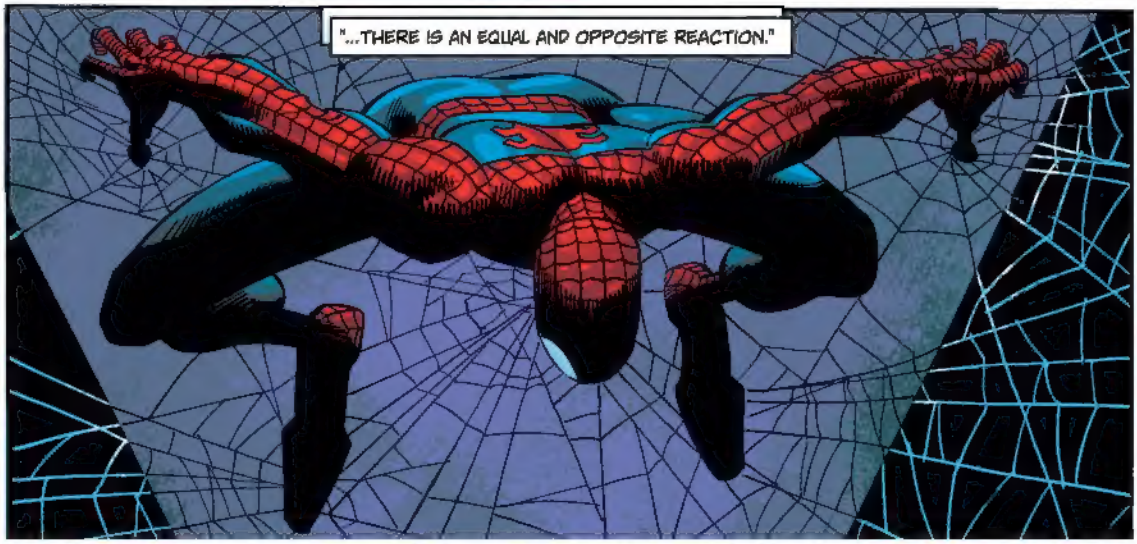

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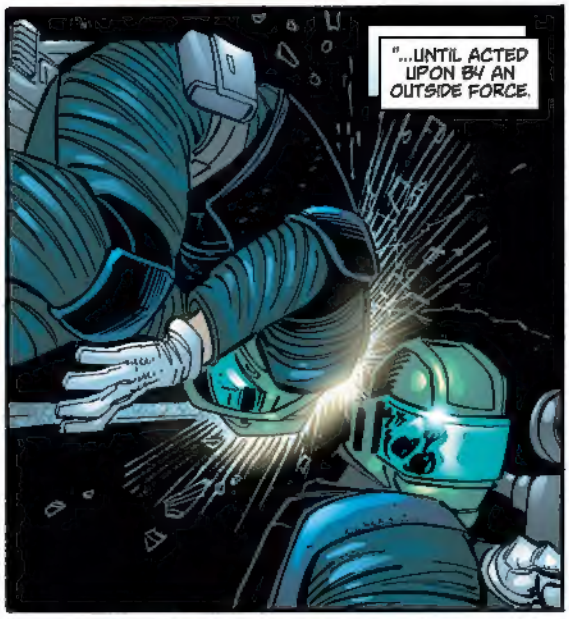
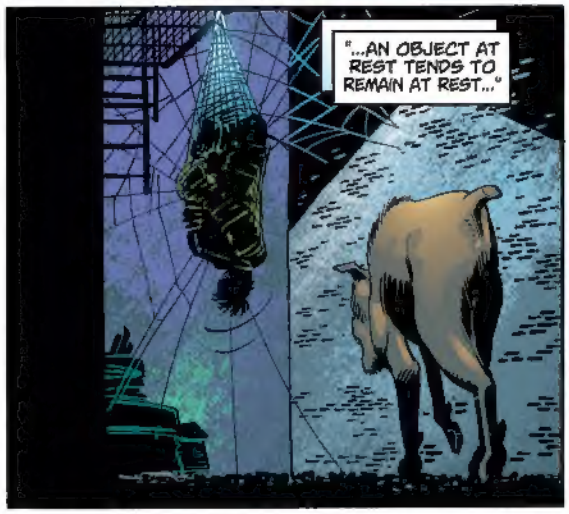
"THE LAWS OF INERTIA TELL US...

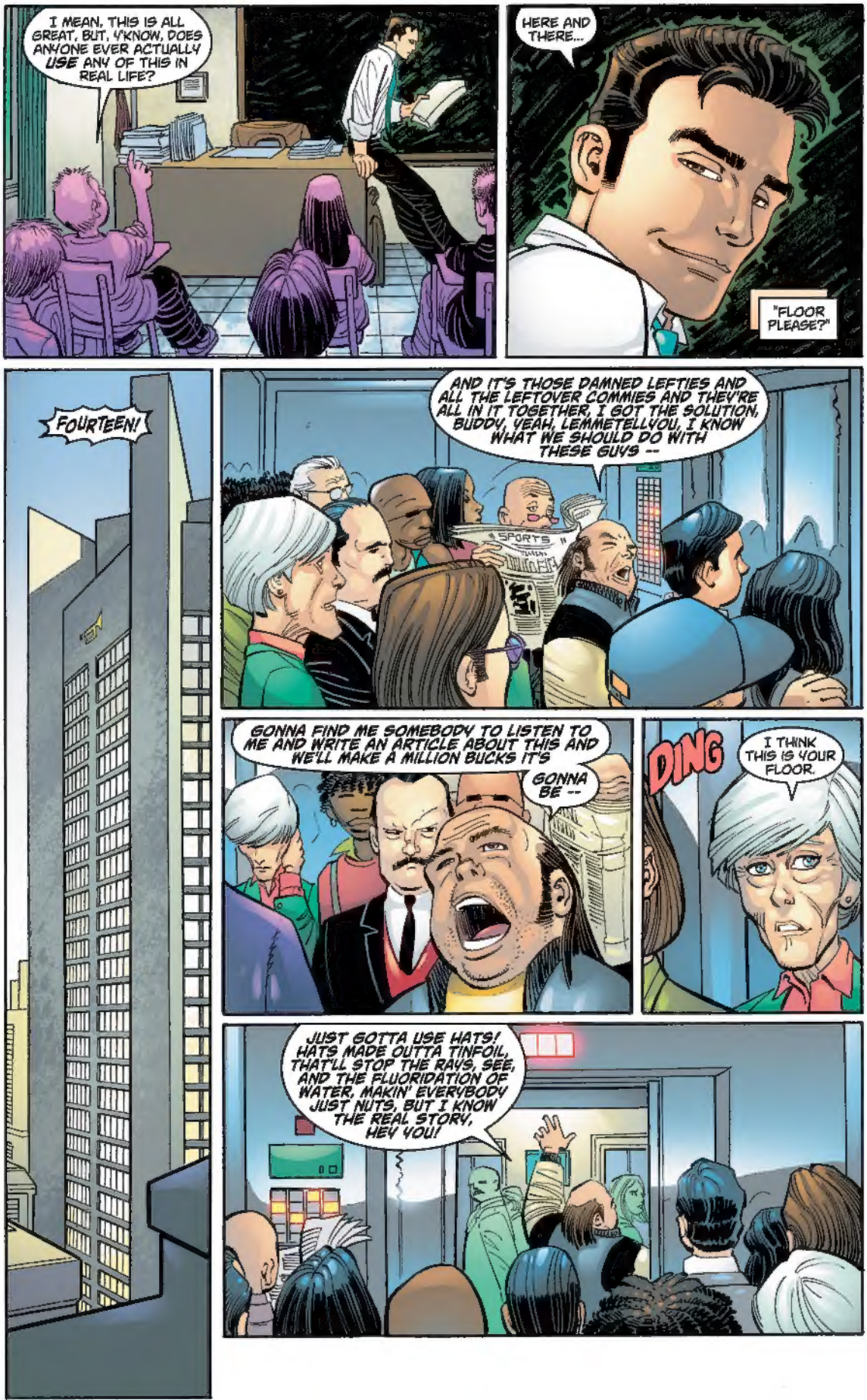
"...THAT AN OBJECT IN MOTION TENDS TO REMAIN IN MOTION...


"...UNTIL ACTED UPON BY AN OUTSIDE FORCE.

"SIMILARLY...


"...AN OBJECT AT REST TENDS TO REMAIN AT REST..."

NICE DOGGIE... NICE DOGGIE...
GRRRRRR
"...UNTIL IT, TOO, IS ACTED UPON BY AN OUTSIDE FORCE."
"ONE THING I DON'T GET, MR. PARKER."

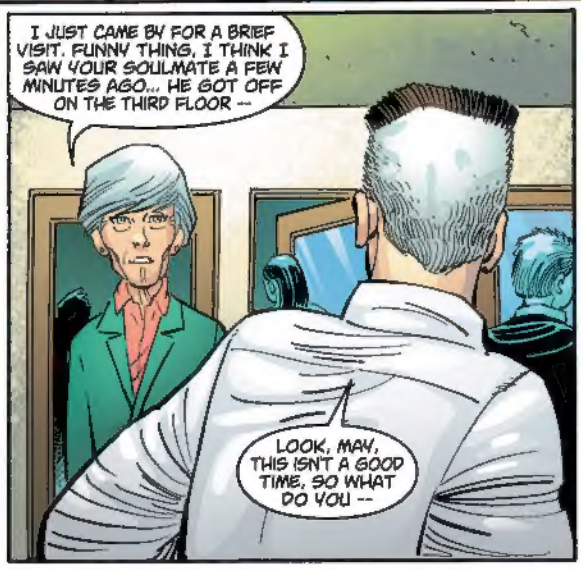

I MEAN, THIS IS ALL GREAT, BUT, Y'KNOW, DOES ANYONE EVER ACTUALLY USE ANY OF THIS IN REAL LIFE?
HERE AND THERE...
"FLOOR PLEASE?"
FOURTEEN!
AND IT'S THOSE DAMNED LEFTIES AND ALL THE LEFTOVER COMMIES AND THEY'RE ALL IN IT TOGETHER, I GOT THE SOLUTION, BUDDY, YEAH, LEMMETELLYOU, I KNOW WHAT WE SHOULD DO WITH THESE GUYS --
SPORTS
GONNA FIND ME SOMEBODY TO LISTEN TO ME AND WRITE AN ARTICLE ABOUT THIS AND WE'LL MAKE A MILLION BUCKS IT'S
GONNA BE --
DING
I THINK THIS IS YOUR FLOOR.
JUST GOTTA USE HATS! HATS MADE OUTTA TINFOIL, THAT'LL STOP THE RAYS, SEE, AND THE FLUORIDATION OF WATER, MAKIN' EVERYBODY JUST NUTS, BUT I KNOW THE REAL STORY, HEY YOU!

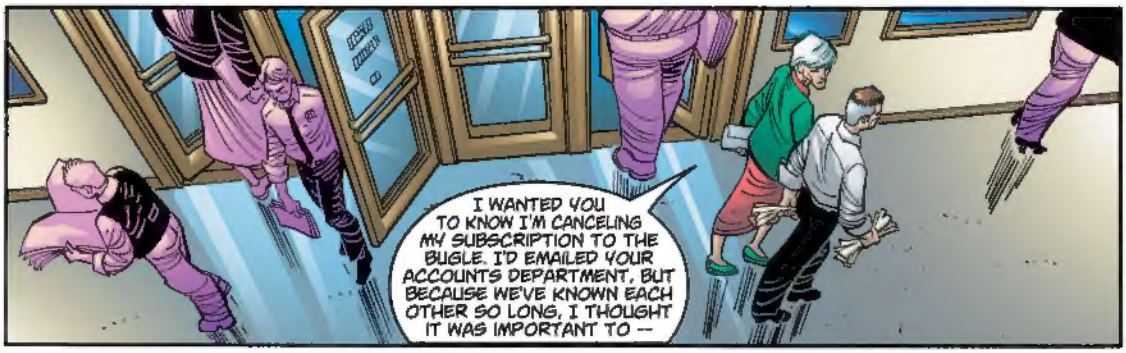
I THINK HE SAID HE WANTED TO GET OFF ON FOURTEEN. THAT WAS THE THIRD FLOOR.
WAS IT REALLY?

WELL, THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET OLD, YOU SEE... LITTLE THINGS LIKE THAT JUST SLIP RIGHT PAST YOU. I DON'T SEE *HOW* I COULD HAVE MADE SUCH A MISTAKE.

--AND WHERE THE HELL DID YOU PEOPLE GET YOUR JOURNALISM DEGREES, FROM THE BACK OF A CEREAL BOX? I HAVEN'T SEEN THIS KIND OF SLOPPY REPORTING OUTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD --
DING

I WANT THIS COPY REWRITTEN IN TWENTY MINUTES OR THERE'S GONNA BE HELL TO PAY --
HELLO, JONAH.
SO DON'T TRY TO --
OH... HELLO, MAY. WHAT'RE YOU --


I JUST CAME BY FOR A BRIEF VISIT. FUNNY THING, I THINK I SAW YOUR SOULMATE A FEW MINUTES AGO... HE GOT OFF ON THE THIRD FLOOR --
LOOK, MAY, THIS ISN'T A GOOD TIME, SO WHAT DO YOU --

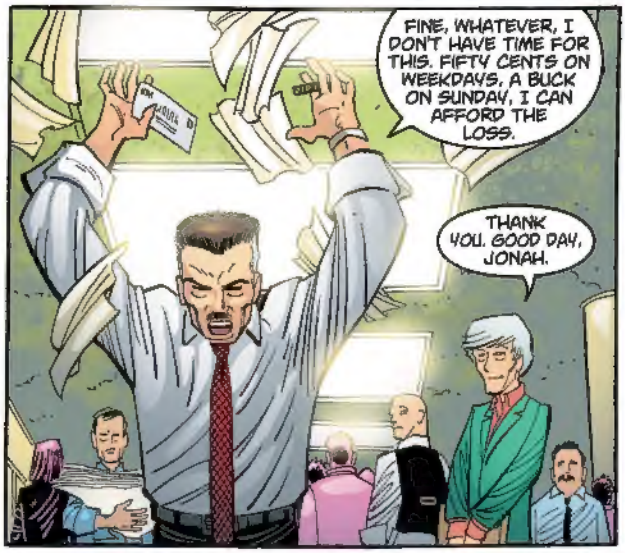

I WANTED YOU TO KNOW I'M CANCELING MY SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BUGLE. I'D EMAILED YOUR ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT, BUT BECAUSE WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER SO LONG, I THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO --

WAITAMINNIT... YOU'RE CANCELING --
THAT'S RIGHT.
WHY?

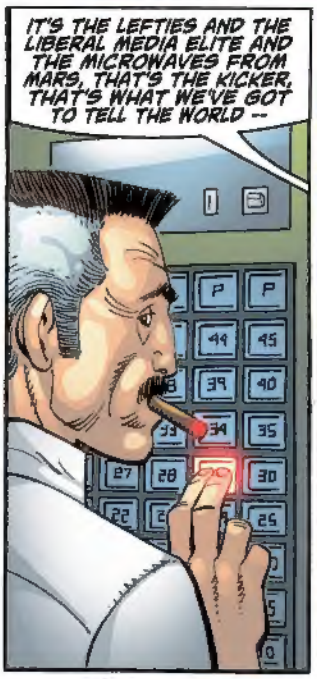
BECAUSE I'M TIRED OF YOU SAYING THOSE TERRIBLE THINGS ABOUT SPIDER-MAN.

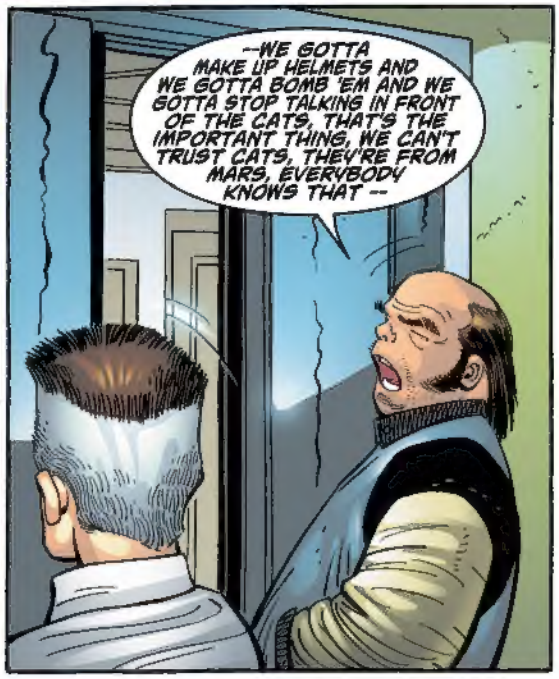
YOU SAID HE WAS A MONSTER.
YES, I DID.
WHAT HAPPENED?
PEOPLE CHANGE.
NOT THAT MUCH.
YOUR EDITORIAL DIRECTION IS FLAWED.
THAT SO?
YES.
YEAH? WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU KNOW THAT I DON'T?

VOLUMES, JONAH. VOLUMES.

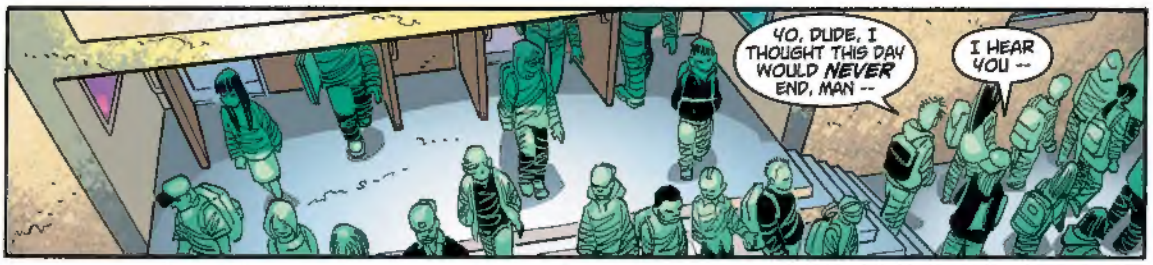

FINE, WHATEVER, I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS. FIFTY CENTS ON WEEKDAYS, A BUCK ON SUNDAY, I CAN AFFORD THE LOSS.
THANK YOU. GOOD DAY, JONAH.

WOMAN'S LOSING IT. SOME DAYS I THINK THE WHOLE FAMILY'S CRAZY AS A BEDBUG. IT'S --


IT'S THE LEFTIES AND THE LIBERAL MEDIA ELITE AND THE MICROWAVES FROM MARS, THAT'S THE KICKER, THAT'S WHAT WE'VE GOT TO TELL THE WORLD --


--WE GOTTA MAKE UP HELMETS AND WE GOTTA BOMB 'EM AND WE GOTTA STOP TALKING IN FRONT OF THE CATS, THAT'S THE IMPORTANT THING, WE CAN'T TRUST CATS, THEY'RE FROM MARS, EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT --

...SIGH...


YO, DUDE, I THOUGHT THIS DAY WOULD NEVER END, MAN --
I HEAR YOU --

MR. PARKER?
JENNY, HI. I WAS GOING TO TRY TO CATCH YOU ON THE WAY OUT. HOW'S YOUR BROTHER?

HE'S GETTING OUT OF THE HOSPITAL TOMORROW. HE'S STILL PRETTY SHAKY. THEY WANT TO GET HIM ON A METH PROGRAM AGAIN.
MAYBE THIS TIME IT'LL STICK.
MAYBE.

LISTEN, MR. PARKER, YOU SAID IF I NEEDED ANYTHING, I COULD COME TO YOU. IF THAT'S STILL, LIKE, THE DEAL --
IT IS.
I REALLY NEED YOU TO COME CHECK OUT SOMETHING. I TALKED TO SOME OF THE OTHERS, TOLD 'EM YOU WERE OKAY. I MEAN, I KNOW YOU PROBABLY HAVE OTHER STUFF TO DO, BUT --

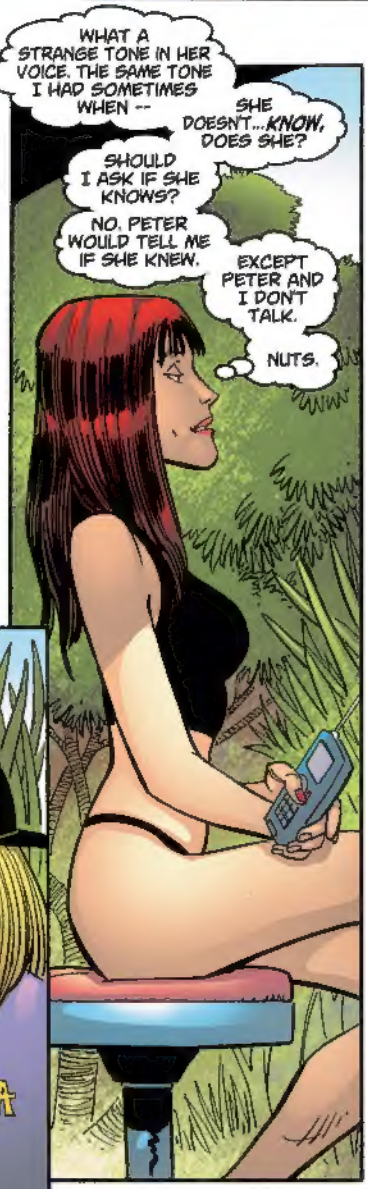
NOT A PROBLEM. LEAD ON...

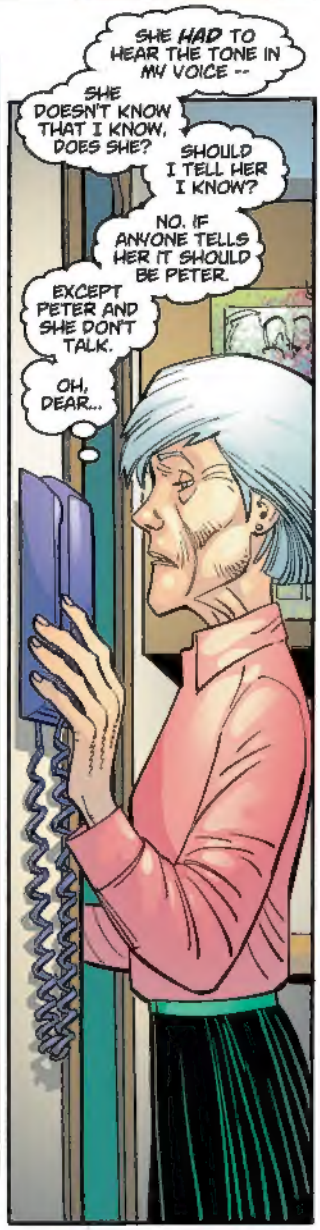
RINNNNG

HELLO?
MAY? HI, IT'S MJ.

MARY JANE... MY GOODNESS, HOW ARE YOU?
FINE...FINE... WE'RE OUT ON A SHOOT AND I'VE GOT A FEW MINUTES BETWEEN SET-UPS, SO I JUST...THOUGHT I'D CALL AND SEE HOW YOU WERE.

OH...FINE, FINE...IT'S BEEN A...WELL, IT'S BEEN HECTIC LATELY, BUT EVERYTHING'S JUST FINE, REALLY...
AND PETER?
BETTER. I MEAN, NOT THAT HE WAS HURT OR ANYTHING, HE JUST... THAT IS TO SAY WE BOTH HAD A LOT ON OUR MINDS, BUT HE'S...
HE'S FINE, MARY JANE, COULDN'T BE FINER.


WHAT A STRANGE TONE IN HER VOICE. THE SAME TONE I HAD SOMETIMES WHEN --
SHE DOESN'T...KNOW, DOES SHE?
SHOULD I ASK IF SHE KNOWS?
NO. PETER WOULD TELL ME IF SHE KNEW.
EXCEPT PETER AND I DON'T TALK.
NUTS.


SHE HAD TO HEAR THE TONE IN MY VOICE --
SHE DOESN'T KNOW THAT I KNOW, DOES SHE?
SHOULD I TELL HER I KNOW?
NO. IF ANYONE TELLS HER IT SHOULD BE PETER.
EXCEPT PETER AND SHE DON'T TALK.
OH, DEAR...

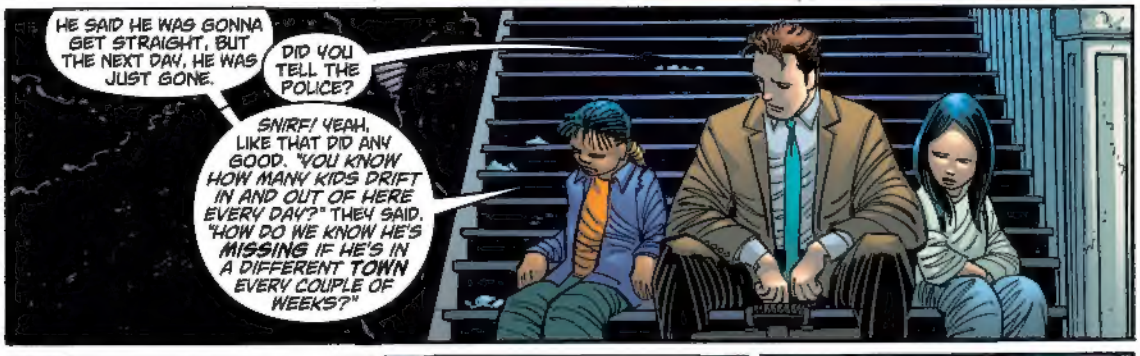
OOPS... LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE ABOUT READY FOR ME AFTER ALL, MAY. I'LL TRY TO CALL AGAIN SOON.
ALL RIGHT, MARY JANE. YOU TAKE CARE. GOODBYE.

-- IT'S JUST A LITTLE FURTHER, MR. PARKER. THIS WAY...
LIQUOR

THIS ISN'T THE SAME PLACE YOU AND THE OTHER KIDS LIVE --
NO. THERE'S LOTS OF PLACES LIKE THIS. WHEN YOU'RE ON THE STREET, YOU KINDA LIVE WHERE YOU CAN. IF IT'S AN ABANDONED BUILDING OR A FLAT AREA UNDER A BRIDGE, YOU CAN BE SURE SOMEBODY'S SQUATTING THERE.
SUSIE? YOU THERE?

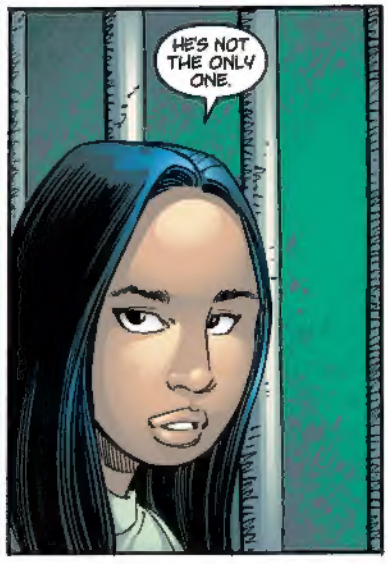
JENNY... HEY...
HI. THIS IS MR. PARKER, THE ONE I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT.
HI.
HI. SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

I CAME HERE WITH THIS GUY, MIKE, ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO. WE SPLIT 'CAUSE HE WAS DOING DRUGS AND I TOLD HIM I DIDN'T WANT ANY PART OF THAT, BUT I KEPT TRYING TO HELP HIM GET PAST IT.
YEAH, HERE'S A SPOT.


HE SAID HE WAS GONNA GET STRAIGHT, BUT THE NEXT DAY, HE WAS JUST GONE.
DID YOU TELL THE POLICE?
SNIRF! YEAH, LIKE THAT DID ANY GOOD. "YOU KNOW HOW MANY KIDS DRIFT IN AND OUT OF HERE EVERY DAY?" THEY SAID. "HOW DO WE KNOW HE'S MISSING IF HE'S IN A DIFFERENT TOWN EVERY COUPLE OF WEEKS?"

I TOLD 'EM HE WOULDN'T JUST UP AND LEAVE LIKE THAT, BUT THEY SAID IT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME, GIRLS GET DITCHED, BUT THAT'S NOT THE POINT. IT'S LIKE, IF YOU DON'T HAVE A REGULAR ADDRESS, OR PARENTS, OR A JOB, THEY DON'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING.

I...DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT THIS, SUSIE... ON ONE LEVEL, THEY'RE RIGHT, IF A KID'S ON THE ROAD, A DRIFTER, IT'S HARD TO PROVE HE'S MISSING --
BUT HE IS, MR. PARKER. AND SOMETHING ELSE...

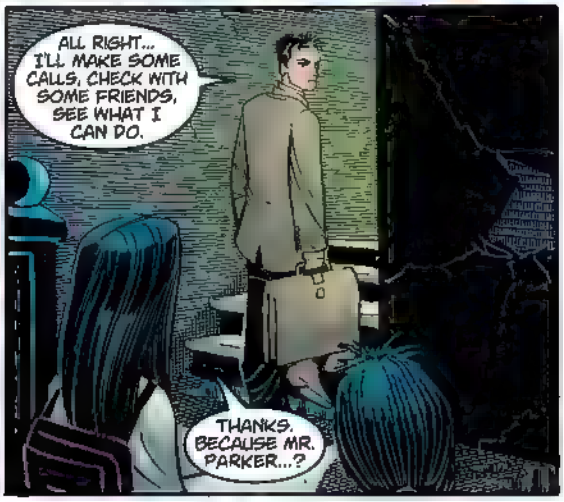

HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE.

IT'S LOTS OF STREET GUYS AROUND HERE. MOST OF 'EM ARE AROUND LATE HIGH SCHOOL, EARLY COLLEGE AGE, MOSTLY USERS. THEY'VE BEEN JUST UP AND DISAPPEARING.
HAVE YOU REPORTED THIS TO THE --

RIGHT... NEVER MIND
HAVE THERE BEEN ANY BODIES FOUND?

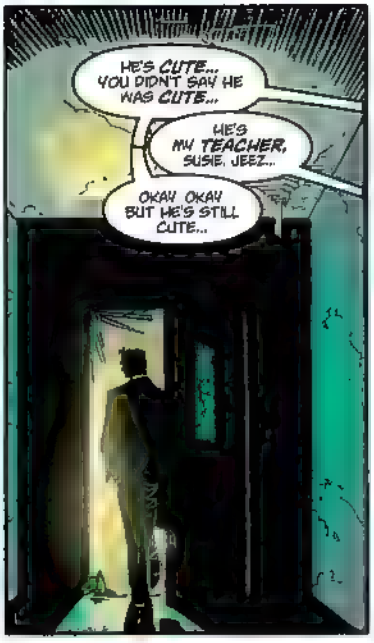
NO, THAT'S THE THING, IT'S LIKE THEY LITERALLY JUST DISAPPEARED. AND A LOT OF 'EM WERE, LIKE, JUST STARTING TO GET THEIR LIVES TOGETHER, Y'KNOW?

I'LL BE HONEST WITH YOU, JENNY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT THIS... IT ISN'T EXACTLY MY AREA.
ANYTHING WOULD BE GOOD, MR. PARKER.
ANYTHING.


ALL RIGHT... I'LL MAKE SOME CALLS, CHECK WITH SOME FRIENDS, SEE WHAT I CAN DO.
THANKS. BECAUSE MR. PARKER...?

JOHNNY'LL BE BACK SOON. I DON'T... I JUST DON'T WANT ANYTHING ELSE TO HAPPEN TO HIM, Y'KNOW?

YEAH. I KNOW.
I'LL CHECK BACK LATER IF I HEAR ANYTHING.


HE'S CUTE... YOU DIDN'T SAY HE WAS CUTE...
HE'S MY TEACHER, SUSIE. JEEZ...
OKAY OKAY BUT HE'S STILL CUTE...

"...IN, Y'KNOW, A DORKY SORT OF WAY."
Y'KNOW...THERE ARE NIGHTS I JUST FEEL STUPID
I MAKE THREE PHONE CALLS TO THE POLICE, AND I GET NOTHING. NADA. TWO CALLS TO SOCIAL WORKERS. MORE NADA.
OR WOULD THAT BE LESS NADA?
A WHOLE LOTTANADA? NADALOT?
NUTS.
HEY, LOIS, C'MON OUT ON THE FIRE ESCAPE, IT'S COOLER OUT HERE. I GOT POPCORN.
BUTTERED OR PLAIN?
BUTTERED
REAL BUTTER OR THAT FAKE STUFF?
REAL BUTTER

WHO'RE YOU TALKING TO? AND HEY, WHAT'S THE IDEA OF EATING ALL THE POPCORN?
I LOVE LIVING IN THE CITY
OTHER THAN THAT, WHAT DO I HAVE TO WORK WITH? NOTHING. ALL I CAN DO IS WAIT FOR SOMETHING TO HAPPEN AND REACT
I NEED RESOURCES LIKE...A SPIDER-CAVE. WITH COMPUTERS. AND MAYBE A SMART SIDEKICK. KID PUPA. ARACHNO-BOY. WEBBIE. SOMETHING OR OTHER.
I NEED...
I NEED SOMETHING TO WASH THIS DOWN WITH.
...CHHHKK... CHHHKKKK...
UH-OH...
SOMETHING'S WRONG.
REALLY WRONG.

HELP MEEEEEEEEEE...

LET HIM GO!

HEY. HOW'S IT GOING?

OOOF!

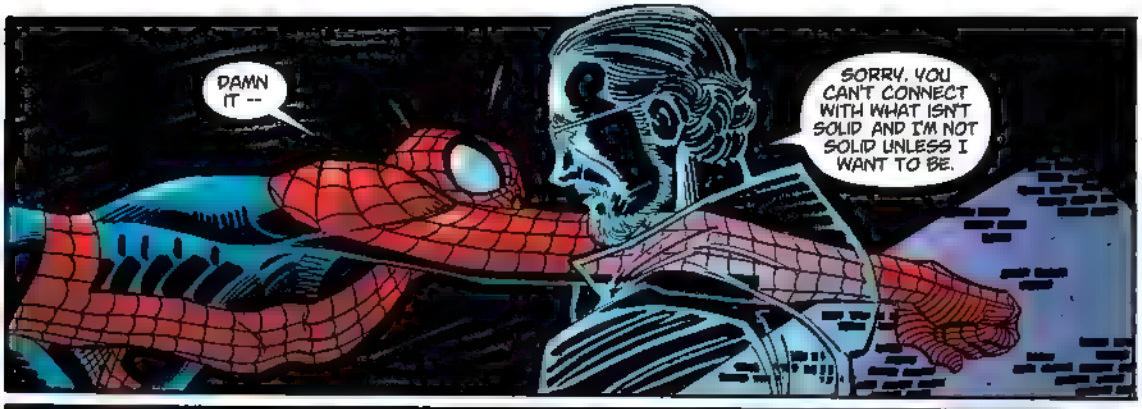
FIGURED I'D RUN INTO YOU ONE OF THESE DAYS. THEY SAID I SHOULD BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR YOU.

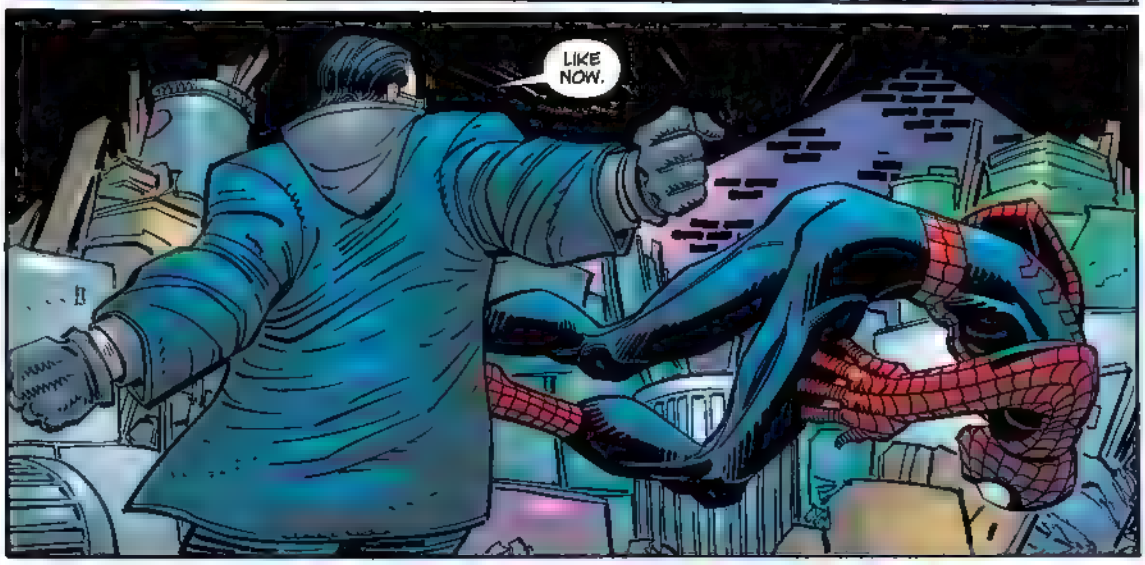
WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM?

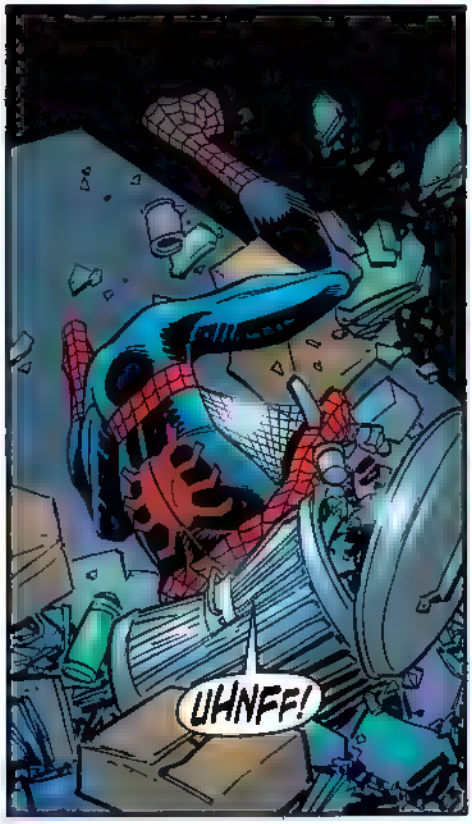
GONE.

SORTA.

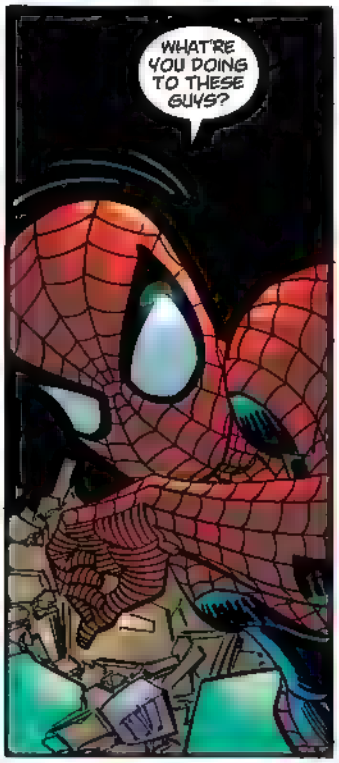
IT'S A LONG STORY.

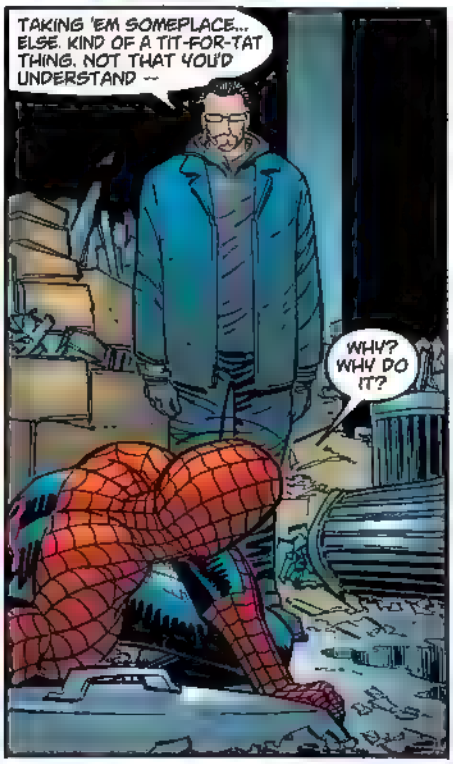

DAMN IT --
SORRY. YOU CAN'T CONNECT WITH WHAT ISN'T SOLID AND I'M NOT SOLID UNLESS I WANT TO BE.


LIKE NOW.

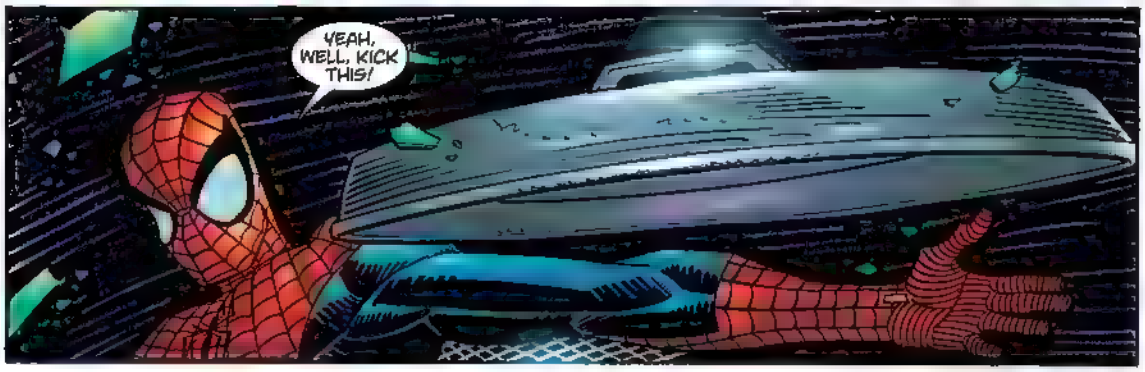

UHNFF!

KIND OF A SLOW LEARNER, AREN'T YOU?

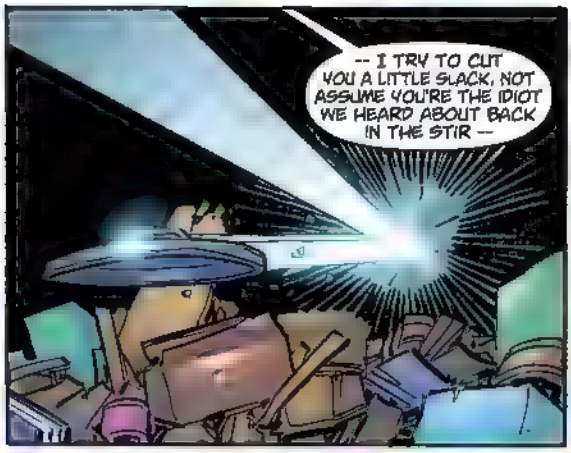

WHAT'RE YOU DOING TO THESE GUYS?

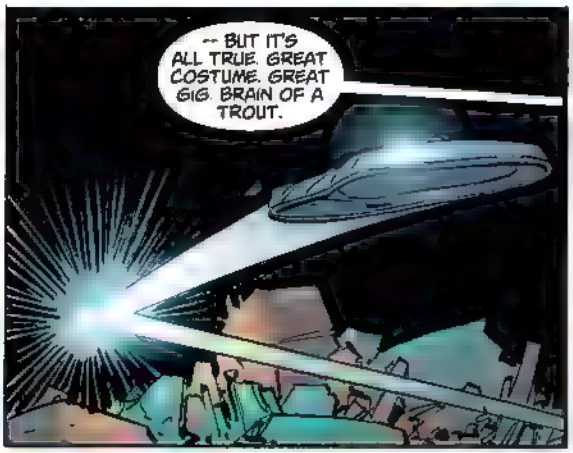

TAKING 'EM SOMEPLACE... ELSE. KIND OF A TIT-FOR-TAT THING. NOT THAT YOU'D UNDERSTAND --
WHY? WHY DO IT?

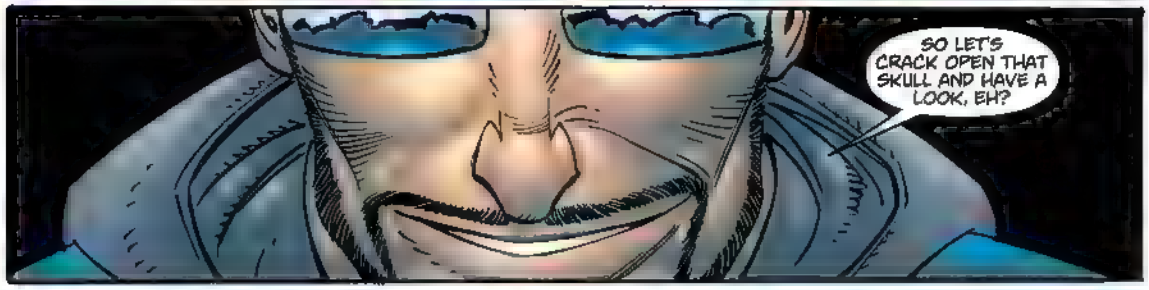
WHY? SAME REASON I'M STANDING HERE HAVING A LITTLE CHIN-WAG WITH A MORON LIKE YOU.
FOR THE KICKS, MAN. IT'S JUST FOR THE KICKS.

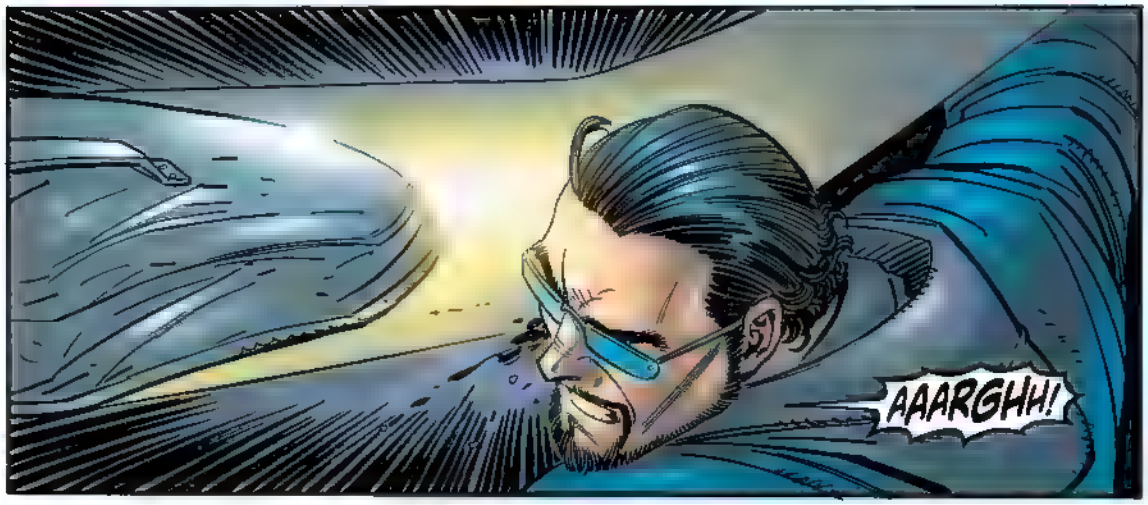

YEAH, WELL, KICK THIS!

SEE? LIKE I SAID --

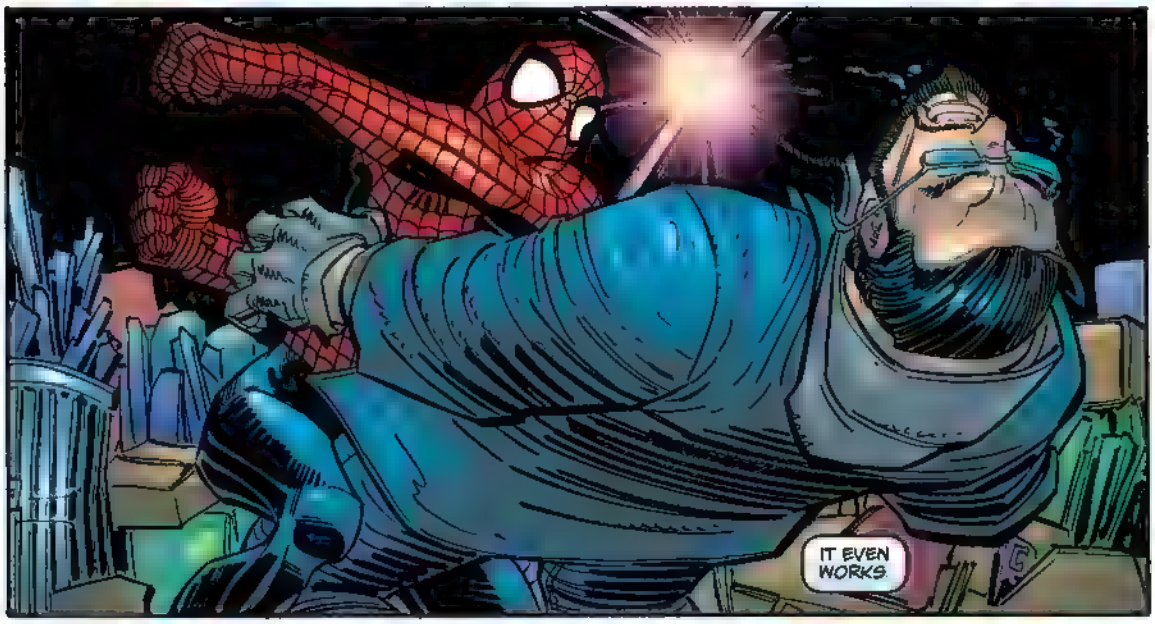

-- I TRY TO CUT YOU A LITTLE SLACK, NOT ASSUME YOU'RE THE IDIOT WE HEARD ABOUT BACK IN THE STIR --

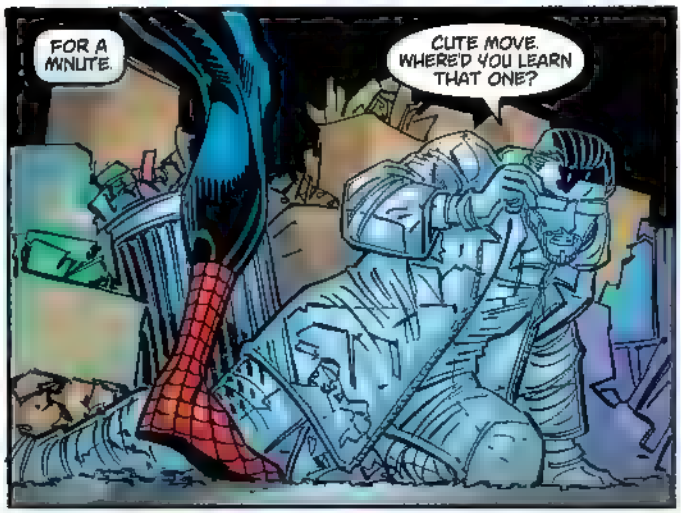

-- BUT IT'S ALL TRUE. GREAT COSTUME. GREAT GIG. BRAIN OF A TROUT.


SO LET'S CRACK OPEN THAT SKULL AND HAVE A LOOK, EH?


AAARGHH!

YOU FIRST.
I HIT HIM HARD AND FAST, TRYING TO KEEP HIM OFF BALANCE SO HE CAN'T TURN TO SMOKE AGAIN ON ME.


IT EVEN WORKS

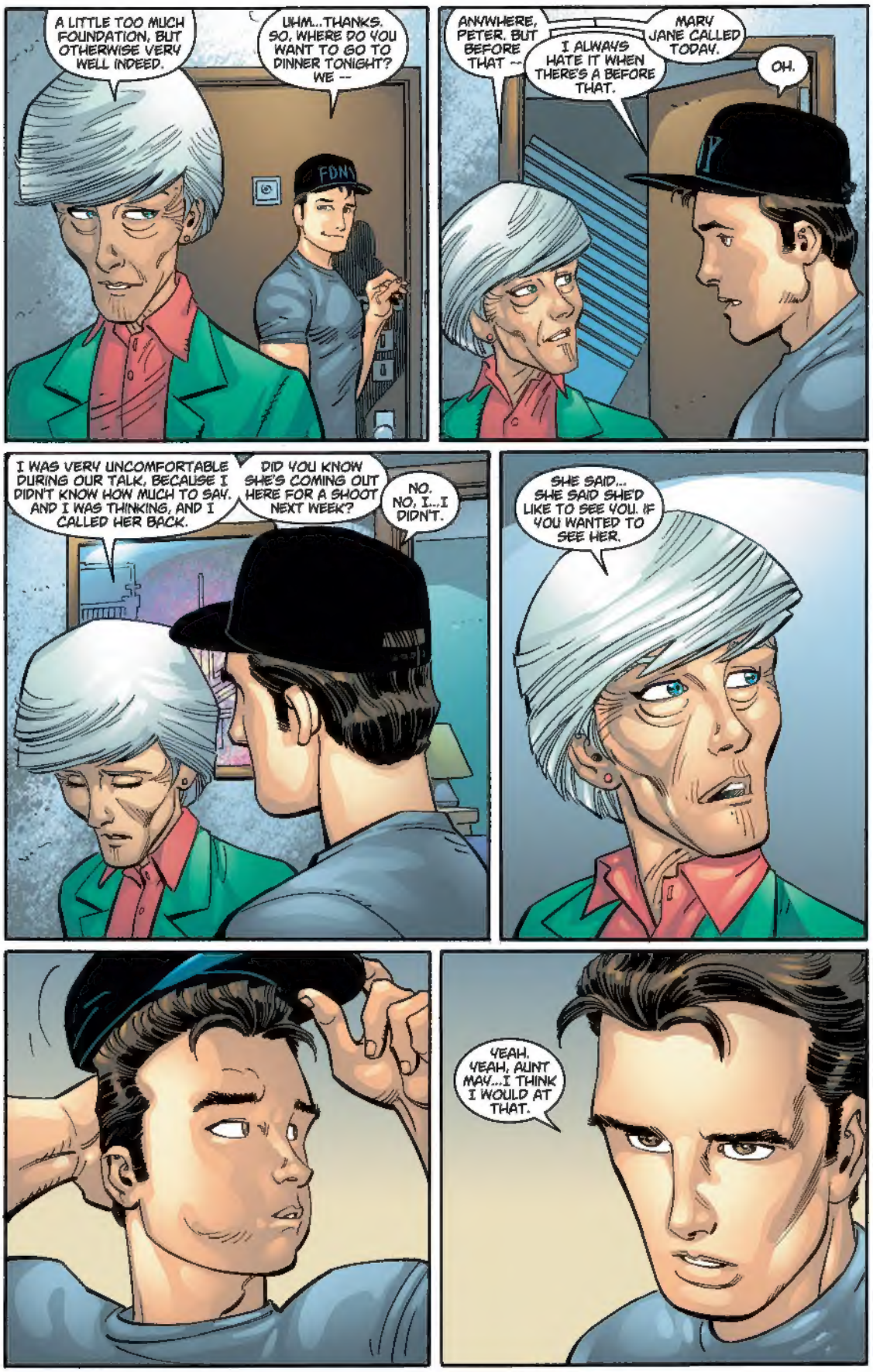

FOR A MINUTE.
CUTE MOVE. WHERE'D YOU LEARN THAT ONE?

YOU WATCH CAPTAIN AMERICA IN ACTION LONG ENOUGH, YOU PICK UP A FEW THINGS.

YEAH, WELL, I GOTTA GO.
IF YOU'RE SMART, YOU'LL STAY OUTTA THIS PART OF TOWN.
GO FIGHT SOMEBODY IN A CHEAP COSTUME AND STAY OUTTA THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THIS AIN'T YOUR KIND OF PLACE...
HEY!
NUTS.

I SPEND THE NEXT TWENTY MINUTES CHECKING OUT EVERY INCH OF THE ALLEY. NO SIGN OF ANY DEVICES, NO INSTRUMENTATION, NO NOTHING. WHATEVER HE DID, HE DID IT ON HIS OWN.
BUT AT LEAST I KNOW MORE NOW THAN I DID AN HOUR AGO.
I KNOW SOMEBODY'S TAKING PEOPLE INTO WHAT LOOKS LIKE ANOTHER KIND OF SPACE. I KNOW THAT THERE'S SOME KIND OF QUID PRO QUO GOING ON HERE, AND THAT HE WAS IN STIR.
BETWEEN THAT AND THE BLACK STAR TATTOO, AT LEAST I'VE GOT SOMEWHERE TO START.
WHAT I DON'T HAVE IS WHAT HIS CONNECTION IS TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD, AND WHY MAINLY GO AFTER GUYS WHO'RE USERS?
ONE THING AT A TIME, PETER. ONE THING AT A TIME.

THIS IS SO EMBARRASSING.
HAVING TO PUT ON MAKEUP SO AUNT MAY WON'T FLIP OUT AT THE BRUISES. BUT IT'S NECESSARY. SHE'S STILL ADJUSTING TO THE TRUTH, AND I'D LIKE TO EASE HER INTO IT WITH A MINIMUM OF TRAUMA.
HOW MANY SUPER HEROES HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT MATCHING THEIR SKIN TONE TO THE RIGHT FOUNDATION?
WELL, OKAY, THERE'S ALWAYS SHE-HULK.
GOOD THING I GOT TO SEE MJ PUTTING HERSELF THROUGH HER PACES EVERY MORNING. LOOKING FLAWLESS DOESN'T COME EASY.
NOT THAT SHE EVER NEEDED ANYTHING TO LOOK FLAWLESS TO ME.
BRIIING
COMING...
HEY, AND HOW'S THE PRETTIEST LADY THIS SIDE OF THE MONA LISA DOING TODAY?
FINE, PETER. YOU'RE LOOKING WELL.


A LITTLE TOO MUCH FOUNDATION, BUT OTHERWISE VERY WELL INDEED.
UHM...THANKS. SO, WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO TO DINNER TONIGHT? WE --
FDNY
ANYWHERE, PETER. BUT BEFORE THAT --
I ALWAYS HATE IT WHEN THERE'S A BEFORE THAT.
MARY JANE CALLED TODAY.
OH.
I WAS VERY UNCOMFORTABLE DURING OUR TALK, BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW HOW MUCH TO SAY. AND I WAS THINKING, AND I CALLED HER BACK.
DID YOU KNOW SHE'S COMING OUT HERE FOR A SHOOT NEXT WEEK?
NO. NO, I...I DIDN'T.
SHE SAID... SHE SAID SHE'D LIKE TO SEE YOU. IF YOU WANTED TO SEE HER.
YEAH. YEAH, AUNT MAY...I THINK I WOULD AT THAT.